



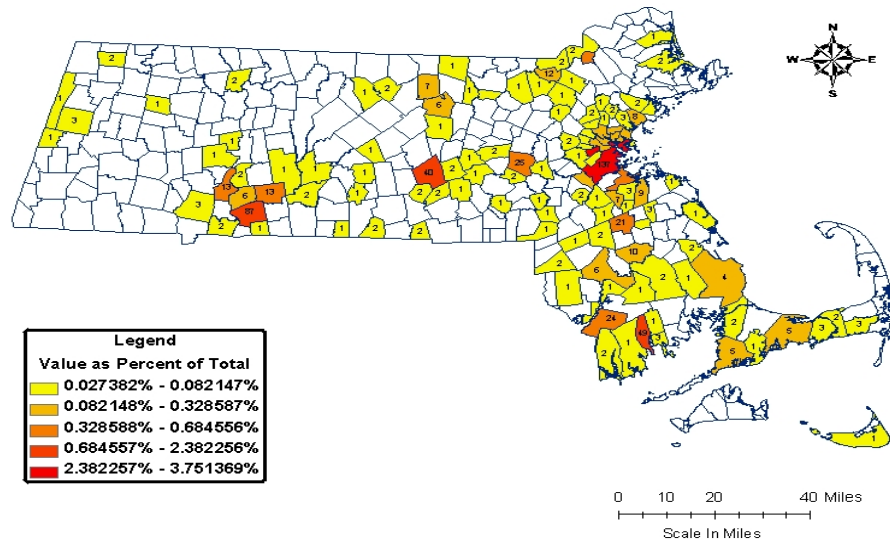
News from the Massachusetts Parole Board

April, 2006

Parole News

Massachusetts Parole Board

**Massachusetts Regional Reentry Centers
Cities And Towns Offenders Returned To: 10/2004 - 10/2005**



GIS Map depicts cities and towns returned to by 714 ex-offenders processed at the Parole Board's Regional Reentry Centers between October, 2004 and October, 2005. *(map created by Stephanie Coughlin)*

This month, Massachusetts Parole Board Program Coordinator Stephanie Coughlin learned a skill that will increase the agency's ability to track the number of ex-offenders returning to each Massachusetts community. Ms. Coughlin took a two-day beginner's course on the GIS [Geographic Information Systems] mapping software ArcView 9.1. The course was held by Environmental Systems Research Institute [ESRI], an international corporation that provides technical assistance and training to GIS users, and sells GIS software.

In June, Ms. Coughlin will attend a quarterly meeting for all GIS users in the state, joining representatives from the Office of the Commissioner of Probation and the Massachusetts Sentencing Commission, as well as other state agencies.

So far, Ms. Coughlin has used ArcView to create two maps depicting the rate at which ex-offenders processed at the Parole Board's Regional Reentry Centers [RRC's] are returning to Massachusetts cities and towns. The map depicts the geographical location (city or town) of 714 ex-offenders processed at the RRC's statewide between October, 2004 and October, 2005.

The map shows that during this time a total of 137 ex-offenders returned to the Boston area, 87 returned to Springfield, 49 returned to New Bedford, 40 returned to Worcester, and 25 returned to Framingham.

The remaining ex-offenders returned to other locations throughout the state.

At the completion of the Violent Incarceration/Truth in Sentencing [VOI/TIS] grant, a year-long project providing housing and substance abuse treatment to parolees and ex-offenders, Ms. Coughlin will create a map showing where VOI/TIS participants relocate after completing the program.

Ms. Coughlin welcomes ideas for additional mapping projects from anyone in the agency. She can be reached at 617-725-3379, or stephanie.coughlin@state.ma.us.

Those who would like an enlarged version of the above map may contact Ms. Coughlin.



Chairman's Column

By Parole Board Chairman Maureen Walsh

This month, myself and few others in the agency had the opportunity to attend the 22nd Annual Association of Paroling Authorities International [APAI] Conference. I would like to take an opportunity to share with you a few thoughts and ideas that resulted from attending this training session.

This conference, which is attended by about 300 professionals in parole across the country (as well as Canada) is one of the only conferences that focuses solely on issues relating to paroling authorities. Therefore, it is very relevant to our daily operations. It is an opportunity not only to hear about innovative approaches to reducing recidivism and to keep up-to-date with the issues before us, but also to meet our counterparts in different regions and exchange ideas and information.

The good news is that many people were talking about the Massachusetts Parole Board and its reentry system in a very complimentary manner, and using it as a model of best practices. While there, I was able to moderate a session in which Massachusetts and Missouri presented their innovative approaches to reentry for other paroling authorities to consider. Executive Director Donald Giancioppo did an outstanding job in reflecting the good work of the agency, and his presentation about the ever changing role of parole and the importance that parole plays in crime reduction was embraced by the audience.

After the presentation, which was standing room only, many people were asking the Massachusetts team about specific issues that have been barriers to success in their state, and looking for recommendations as to how to best approach the problem. Again, although we may have many areas that need attention, it was extremely rewarding to be asked for advice and to know that the Massachusetts Parole Board is now considered a leader in the field. Simply stated, we have a lot to be proud of!

Also, we brought back with us many different ideas that are worthy of consideration. For example, New York recently went through a process to become accredited as a paroling authority through the American Correctional Association. This might be something to consider for us in the near future. North Carolina has an innovative approach when it comes to offenders with mental health issues. They have hired a specialist with a degree in psychology to aid the Parole Board in its decisions and then to assist the field officers if they are having difficulties assisting offenders with mental illness in the community. Again, this is something worthwhile of consideration. I would welcome anyone's thoughts on improving the agency in relation to these topics or any other area that you think would be helpful.

Finally, this conference once again reaffirmed my commitment and belief in the importance on the agency in the public safety arena. I came away with a new appreciation of the work that we do and with a renewed sense of the difference that we can make.



Parole Board staff meet outside during a break at the National GAINS Center Conference this month at the Park Plaza Hotel in Boston. (*story on pg. 5*)

(*from left*) Region 2 Substance Abuse Coordinator Desiree Huff, Region 1 Reentry Supervisor Cathy Grundstrom, Region 6 Reentry Supervisor Steve Kelly, Region 2 Reentry Supervisor Joseph Waystack, and Region 5 Reentry Officer Karen Casavant. (*front*) Director of Reentry Programs Kira Dunn.

Parole Board Member Doris Dottridge



Doris A. Dottridge was appointed to the Parole Board in 2001. Prior to her appointment, Ms. Dottridge worked for the Mashpee Police Department for 28 years as secretary, dispatcher, matron, patrol officer, corporal, and detective. Ms. Dottridge worked with the FBI and the Secret Service during the first President George Bush's trip to Mashpee. She has worked with the Massachusetts State Police, judges, and court officials.

During her last 11 years on the Mashpee Police Department, Ms. Dottridge worked as a detective and juvenile court prosecutor. She has had extensive experience working with youths in the community and as an advocate for victims sexual abuse and domestic violence. She has organized many programs including Vial of Life and Reassurance, which are programs for senior citizens. She has a certificate from the Plus School of Business, graduated from the Barnstable Police Academy, attended Cape Cod Community College, and attended the Massachusetts Criminal Justice Training Academy. She was awarded Citizen of the Year by the Town of Mashpee, the Lewis Gurwitz Spirit Award from the Mashpee Tribal Council, and a Certificate of Appreciation from U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement.

Why did you decide to apply for membership on the board?

At the time a vacancy opened up on the board, I was working for the Mashpee Police Department as a police officer and had been working for the D.A.R.E. program. Throughout my career as a police officer, I believed in the principles of "community policing" and always believed that crime prevention and assisting members of the community were equally important as the detection of crime. As the D.A.R.E. representative, I was able to meet with many students on Cape Cod and speak to them about choices in life and the importance of abstaining from drugs and alcohol. Because of my community involvement, I was approached by former Barnstable District Attorney Philip A. Rollins and Barnstable County Commissioner Mary LeClair, asking if I would be interested in changing jobs and working for the state on the Parole Board. They felt I had the ability to be fair and objective, and that my experience on the police department both with offenders and the community would be beneficial to the Parole Board.

What do you find most satisfying or enjoyable about being on the board?

I enjoy the people I work with. Their sense of humor helps alleviate the stress that comes with the job. I also enjoy the fact that this job is always challenging, since it involves human behavior which is not very predictable. As a board member, you hear a different story every day.

What do you think the most challenging aspect of the job is?

Being able to balance the inmate's version of the crime and his or her progression since then, taking into account the victim's concern and the safety of the public. Being fair and objective and making a sound and solid judgment in my decisions.

How do you think your prior experience has informed your work on the board?

I have worked for 28 years in law enforcement, working on many different boards and regional teams. Working with criminals and victims for years, listening to them while being fair and objective about their needs, while using common sense in enforcing the laws of the Commonwealth with the full support of the Barnstable County District Attorney's Office. All of these experiences, along with my own life experience, assist me daily in my role as a board member. I try to approach every case with common sense and with fairness and objectivity. I also make every effort to treat everyone who comes before me with respect and dignity.

Did you know Mildred McDonald?

I am writing a biography of MILDRED ("Millie") McDONALD, a Massachusetts parolee from 1959 to 1970. If you knew Millie, I would like to talk with you.

I am particularly interested in talking with anyone who might have known Millie while she was a "student" at the FRAMINGHAM REFORMATORY FOR WOMEN during the period 1953-1959. I am also interested in any information regarding Millie's former PAROLE OFFICERS:

- Supervisor/Officer Katherine Quinn
- Officer Sally Geller
- Officer Eleanor O'Rourke

Or any former members of the PAROLE BOARD:

- Cornelius Twomey
- Patrick A. Menton
- Julian Steele
- Cecilia McGovern
- Katharine Sullivan

ALSO, I am interested in talking with former STAFF MEMBERS of the Framingham Reformatory during the period 1953-1959, particularly ALICE MAHER or Dr. EDWARD H. BARRY, or anyone who knew LORRAINE CLARK.

Finally...if you have old copies of HARMONY NEWS (the literary newsletter published by the reformatory's students) from 1953 to 1959, I would look forward to hearing from you. Please call, write or email me, William, at:

P.O Box 382443

Cambridge, MA 02238-2443

phone: (781) 251-0789

email: WOpen5469@aol.com (please put "Mildred McDonald" in the subject line)

Thank you.

Inter-agency Cooperation Leads to "Latin Kings" Arrest

Cooperation among five parole officers from three regional offices led to the arrest of parolee Jason Anderson, 30, who absconded from parole supervision on March 20.

Considered a potential danger to public safety, Mr. Anderson is now in custody. Mr. Anderson has a violent criminal history, including ten commitments to correctional facilities throughout Massachusetts, and is the alleged leader of the "Latin Kings," gang in Lawrence. The gang was originally started by Latino inmates who wanted to defend themselves against other prison gangs and has been implicated in violence and criminal activity outside prison.

Shortly after Mr. Anderson absconded from his Cape Cod address, Parole Officer David Miller of the New Bedford [Region 8] Parole Office obtained intelligence revealing that Mr. Anderson was on the North Shore. Through the efforts of Parole Supervisor Jim Roach and Parole Officer Mark Fournier of the Lawrence [Region 6] Parole Office, as well as Parole Officer Karen Rourke and Assistant Parole Supervisor Peter Carver of the Brockton [Region 7] Parole Office, Mr. Anderson was arrested in the home of a family friend on March 30.

Region 6 Regional Reentry Center helps ex-offender re-orient, readjust

Anthony Reynolds, 27, was released with no post release supervision from Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center on February 9, 2006, after serving a two and a half to four year sentence for a sex offense.

Michelle Kitchen, housing liaison for the South Middlesex Opportunity Council [SMOC], a private agency that works with Parole to provide ex-offenders with shelter, counseling, and other services, notified the Region 6 [Lawrence] Parole Office of Mr. Reynold's release.

Mr. Reynolds was transported to the Lawrence Regional Reentry Center of the day of his release. Shortly after his arrival, Lawrence Reentry Supervisor Steve Kelly transported him to the Lowell Police Department to initiate the sex offender registration process in order to comply with all Sex Offender Registry Board requirements. In addition to bringing Mr. Reynolds to the local police department, Supervisor Kelly and Reentry Officer Ann Clegg assisted Mr. Reynolds in making contact with the local Social Security Office, Lowell Family Health Center, local career center, and SMOC housing and case management office. In addition, they assisted Mr. Reynolds in finding temporary housing. *(continued on pg. 6)*



The Parole Board Victim Service Unit and Parole Board members join Chairman Maureen Walsh (center) at the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance [MOVA] Victim Rights Conference at the State House April 27. Chairman Walsh was recognized for her dedication to victim rights, and presented with the Criminal Justice Award for Outstanding Victim Advocacy. (back row, from left) Victim Service Coordinator [VSC] Lisa Armstrong, Director of Victim Services Thomas Clark, VSC Christine O'Connor, VSC Stacey Pignataro, VSC Kimm Yonika, VSC Linsley Aceto. (front row, from left) Parole Board Member Thomas Merigan, VSC Jen MacDonald, Parole Board Chairman Maureen Walsh, Assistant Director of Victim Services Janice Dean, and Parole Board Member Candace Kochin (*photograph by Nelson Simao*).

Reentry Staff Attend National GAINS Center Conference in Boston, *learn about veterans benefits for ex-offenders*

Reentry officers and staff attended a conference this month on mental health and the criminal justice system held by the National GAINS Center. The three-day conference was held at the Park Plaza Hotel in Boston.

Titled "System Transformation at the Interface of the Criminal Justice Systems," the conference featured dozens of workshops led by criminal justice and mental health professionals from around the country.

GAINS is a national resource for information about effective mental health and substance abuse services for offenders with co-occurring disorders. The center's primary focus is on expanding access to community-based services for offenders with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders.

Reentry Supervisors Ray Chavaree, Cathy Grundstrom, and Joseph Waystack, and Parole Officer Peter Leary were particularly impressed by a veterans benefits workshop sponsored by the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Benefits Clearinghouse of Boston.

The workshop provided information about signing up for veterans benefits and expediting benefits through the Veterans Benefits Administration bureaucracy.

Offenders reporting to the Region 8 [New Bedford] Parole Office and Regional Reentry Center have been identifying themselves as veterans in numbers far lower than the national average, according to Supervisor Chavaree.

After attending the workshop, it occurred to him and to PO Leary, who also works at the New Bedford office, that fewer offenders might be reporting themselves as veterans for a simple reason: the way the question, 'are you a veteran?' is phrased.

"A lot of people who served in the military feel they don't qualify for benefits if they weren't in a combat situation," said Supervisor Chavaree. "But if a person has prior military experience, they can get veterans benefits, which include housing, medical care, and emergency services through the VA." Getting more parolees and ex-offenders to sign up for veterans benefits by making them aware of their eligibility means expanding the range of rehabilitative services parolees and ex-offenders can access through the Regional Reentry Centers.

Reentry staff, including Supervisor Chavaree, plan to meet with the Veterans Benefits Clearinghouse in the coming months to discuss expanding access to veterans benefits access for ex-offenders.

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Grant will support Best Practices for Sex Offender Management

The Massachusetts Parole Board is working with other public safety and human service agencies to improve strategies for managing sex offenders at each stage of the corrections continuum.

The project is being funded by the Department of Justice through the Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Offender Management grant.

The grant supports a planning process to identify strengths and gaps in the current sex offender management system and implement changes three pilot sites: Attleboro, Boston, and the North Quabbin region. These sites were selected for their diverse size and geographical location. The project began in June, 2005 and is expected to wrap up in fall, 2007.

The pilot sites will identify community representatives from law enforcement, supervision, treatment, and government able to provide information about the community's existing sex offender management practices. Community representatives will help to spearhead the policy changes crafted by the grant management team.

The grant management team comprises a steering committee that meets three times per year, an implementation team that meets monthly, and five assessment groups that also meet monthly to gather data on five key components of sex offender management: 1. investigation, prosecution, and disposition, 2. assessment and treatment, 3. reentry, 4. supervision, and 5. registration and community notification. Parole Board Management Consultant Tim Zada is on the implementation team.

Parole Board Program Evaluator Stephanie Coughlin and Region 6 [Lawrence] Reentry Supervisor Steve Kelly are part of the reentry assessment team. The team comprises representatives from district attorneys' offices, police departments, the Department of Transitional Assistance, the Center for Sex Offender Management, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Department of Youth Services, and the Criminal History Systems Board.

The reentry group is reviewing rehabilitation services for sex offenders at institutions, release policies and practices, community based services, specialized supervision and monitoring, victim input, housing and employment, education, and public involvement. The data they gather, in addition to the data gathered by the other assessment teams, will be used to develop policies and practices to implement at the pilot sites.

All members of the grant team, including the assessment teams, steering committee, and implementation team, attended a conference at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel and Trade Center in Marlborough this month, cosponsored by the Massachusetts Adolescent Sexual Offender Coalition and the Massachusetts Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers. Rebecca Bianchi and Sarah Lawrence, who are helping to manage the grant for the Executive Office of Public Safety, presented a workshop entitled "Managing Sex Offenders in Massachusetts: An Assessment of Three Pilot Sites." Ms. Bianchi and Ms. Lawrence presented findings from a detailed assessment of current sex offender management policies and practices throughout the state.

RRC helps ex-offender overcome initial hurdles (continued from pg. 4)

Officer Clegg placed a phone call to the local Department of Mental Health liaison, Heather Hovley, to assist Mr. Reynolds in accessing medication and referrals for counseling. Upon his arrival, it was apparent that Mr. Reynolds did not have medication, including anti-seizure medication. Ms. Hovley contacted the Department of Correction [DOC] Health Services Unit, which quickly responded and delivered his one month supply of medication to Mr. Reynolds.

Mr. Reynolds has now been approved for social security benefits and has tentatively been approved for Department of Mental Health case management. He has started looking for permanent housing and has been able to find part-time employment while he continues to look for a permanent job.

Although he is still experiencing seizures which require medical testing and medication, his situation and stability have improved since he was first released in February and he continues to remain in contact with the staff from the Lawrence Reentry Center for assistance in his reentry.

-this report was compiled by Reentry Supervisor Steve Kelly